

## THE CZAR MADE HER A RUSSIAN COUNTESS

Beautiful Marguerite Cassini Revenged Upon  
European Women Who Ostracised Her  
on Account of Her Beauty.

Marguerite Cassini, the grand niece of the Russian ambassador, has been made a countess by the Czar of Russia.

This honor conferred on a mere girl carries with it special significance in diplomatic and official circles.

Countess Marguerite is barely nineteen years of age. She has already had a remarkable career. Since the age of 16, when she accompanied her uncle on his European diplomatic missions, she has been compelled to face social slights, as well as humiliating rumors and remarks which might well have embittered the character and disposition of an older woman.

From the very infancy of the young girl the Russian ambassador had entire charge of his lovely young niece. When, at his country's command, he went to China, the little Russian girl, then about 15 years old, assumed the social responsibilities incumbent upon the embassy. Her beauty and accomplishments, in addition to the romance of so young a hostess, easily made her a leader in social diplomatic circles.

The wives of other diplomats, some of whom bore ancient titles, resented the high position accorded to this child ambassador—an unmarried, untitled girl, possessed of no fortune save the bounty of charity, as they were so fond of calling it, of her wealthy uncle.

Perhaps had not the young Russian been so beautiful, such unkind remarks would not have been made.

It was during the administration of Count Cassini as ambassador to China that the wives of some of the diplomats, at their gossiping teas, made vague, insinuating remarks which formed the nucleus of the unfounded stories which finally resulted in the fair Russian pleading with her uncle to be allowed to abstain from social duties and social honors and seek seclusion in her home circle. It was said that this unpleasant attitude assumed by the ladies of the diplomatic corps was the chief reason Count Cassini gave in begging to be removed from his Oriental post. Later, when the czar for state and international reasons desired the presence of so able a diplomat as Count Cassini in the French capital, the ambassador, believing that Parisian society would deal more graciously with his charming young niece, opened wide the doors of the embassy and with lavish hospitality entertained at some of the most brilliant festivities of the year.

Marguerite Cassini was at that time 16 years old. Embittered by the harsh rumors that had met her own ears, she had devoted her entire time to study, making books and nature her friends and putting little faith in the stability of man. On the assurance of her uncle that Parisian society was just, she once more assumed the responsibilities of ambassador of the Russian embassy.

But the wild rumors afloat in Peking had preceded the fair Russian to the French capital, and she was treated coldly, not being accepted as "a lady of the diplomatic corps," nor even regarded as a member of the ambassador's household. It was then that Count Cassini asked to be sent to the free and independent land of America. A third time he pleaded with his niece to enter the social world, but her previous experiences instilled in her young heart such a hatred of the frivolous, gilded, insincere manners of those who ruled and dominated worldly society that she flatly refused to mingle in it at all, saying that she preferred her dogs and horses to society men and women, and with a fine argument that the social world cared nothing for her anyway and did not recognize her as one of them, she succeeded in persuading the ambassador to allow her to devote her time to thought and study.

So it was that the first season Count Cassini spent in the United States not entertaining except several official functions which his capacity as ambassador forced upon him, was indulged in by the wealthy count. There are, perhaps, few men in the diplomatic corps who are so fond of entertaining or who are noted for being such gracious hosts as the Russian ambassador.

Countess Cassini, characteristic of her proud nature, withdrew from the sphere which had received her so coldly. She did not seek the social world in America, but almost on its knees it sought her.

Not the diplomatic circles, so far as the women of it were concerned, but the officials of the government, even from the president's immediate family down, were charmed by the innocence, simplicity and originality of the young girl and sought her presence on all occasions. Once more her beauty and charms became famous, and, it is said, had she not been so fair to look upon, the anger and resentment of foreign ladies would not have led them to attempt so strenuously to ostracise the beautiful young Russian.

The stories which were told in China were to the effect that Miss Cassini was the step-daughter of the Russian ambassador. By the time they had traveled across the waters in France—according to the tradition of the three black crows—the rumors declared that she was a daughter of a brother of the count. After they came to America wives of diplomats who had followed the career of the count and his fascinating little niece multiplied the stories by ten, painted them in dark, muddy colors, and when their piece of fiction was completed had decided that she was the child of the ambassador himself.

The wives of several European diplomats, notable among whom was the Baroness von Hengelmüller, wife of the minister from Austria-Hungary, had refused to acknowledge Marguerite Cassini as the ambassador's

rite Cassini as the ambassador of the Russian embassy.

On one occasion last season, when M. Cambon, the ambassador from France, entertained at a dinner of about forty covers given in honor of the foreign diplomats at the American capital, Marguerite Cassini was invited with the Russian ambassador as the presiding lady of the Russian embassy.

The Baroness von Hengelmüller, as the wife of the minister, was accorded a much lower seat at the table than the one given to the niece of the Russian ambassador. Her chagrin and petty envy conquered her self-control and there in the midst of so distinguished a throng she positively refused to accept a seat so far below that of an unmarried, untitled woman whom she deemed neither her social nor moral equal.

With the proud dignity of a queen Marguerite Cassini slowly crossed the room to the side of the French ambassador and requested that the Baroness von Hengelmüller be allowed to occupy the seat which he had so graciously designed for her, and that she be permitted to fill the place made vacant by the wrathful wife of the minister from Austria-Hungary. So quickly and gracefully was this act done that it won for the young girl the admiration of every unprejudiced mind present. A few of the women present, who, through envy, felt only hatred for the fair Russian, sided with the Baroness, but the story spread like wildfire throughout the social world and added many to the already large hosts of the young girl's admirers. However, it also embittered her enemies, who blackened the stories which were already current and lost no opportunity to attempt to ostracise her from official society.

At that time Count Cassini resolved to lay the case before the czar and plead with him to acknowledge Marguerite Cassini as his legally adopted daughter, in order that she might reside over his household and do the honors of the embassy without calling down upon her criticism and vicious comment.

It is said that this was the reason Count Cassini insisted upon his niece accompanying him to their native land during the past summer. Then he presented the case in person to the czar, who willed an audience with the young girl. Her youth, beauty and innocent charms appealed to him not in vain, and he not only issued a decree declaring her the legally adopted daughter of Count Cassini, but in order to raise her far above those who had made so many unkind remarks about her, he conferred upon her the title of Countess de Cassini.

Countess Cassini is a little above medium height and exquisitely formed. Her eyes are large and soulful, by far the most expressive and characteristic feature of her face; an abundance of glistening curls crown her Greek molded head and fall in soft ringlets around her brow and throat. Her skin is wonderfully white and smooth for one with such dark eyes and hair; the only bit of brilliant coloring about her face being her full red lips which are crimson.

She is an accomplished athlete, being an active member of several outdoor clubs. She is an enthusiastic horsewoman and handles the ribbons with ease. She has won several championship cups on the golf links, is fond of wheel riding and enjoys sports. She is fearless in guiding an automobile and was the second woman in the District of Columbia to receive an engineer's permit allowing her to run a locomotive.

She is not engaged to be married, as has been reported, although there have been many who have sought her hand. The young countess is fond of America and calls it her home.

### ENCOURAGING THRIFT.

A Business Man Who Has Found That It Pays.

From the Washington Star.

"I always have confidence in people who save a little money out of their salaries," said a prominent merchant, "and I do what I can to encourage habits of thrift. I employ about 75 clerks in my establishment, to whom I pay weekly salaries ranging from \$10 to \$40. Naturally enough, more of them get the former than the latter sum, but they are none the less worthy on that account. In the beginning, when I employed only two people, I lived pretty close to them, and I knew how thriftless they could be otherwise. I have discharged more clerks for that sort of thing than for any other cause. They spent their salaries, large or small, as might be, in a reckless fashion and let debt accumulate quite regardless of the rights of creditors. As my business increased, and with it my profits and my force of people, I began to give the matter more study, and in the end, when I felt able to be of material assistance in encouraging thrift and honesty, I proposed a yearly recognition to those who would save something out of their salaries. It was small at first, but was so successful that today I haven't a clerk who has not some kind of a bank account, and not who willfully refuses to pay his debts. When we get a new one who refuses to take advantage of the opportunities afforded we let him go at the end of his first year.

"My present plan is to double the savings of all clerks who receive \$10, \$12 and \$15 a week; to add 25 per cent to all who receive from \$15 to \$25, and 10 for those over \$25. A clerk on \$15 a week or under cannot

save much, but as a rule that class of clerks have no one to maintain but themselves, and if one cannot save more than \$25 out of his year's labor, it is rather pleasant for him to get \$25 clear profit. Those who receive the larger amounts usually have families and their savings are not large, but whatever they are they are comfortably increased. One of my \$10-200 a year clerks, with a wife and two small children, saved \$400 last year, and my check for a hundred additional dollars was deposited to his account the day after New Year. A young woman in charge of a department at \$900 a year has almost paid for a nice little cottage in the suburbs out of her extra, and so the list runs on through every branch of the business. I make it a condition that all current obligations must be met at the end of the year, as that the savings are actual net profit. Every year some of the clerks are not entitled to any extra, but if this is the result of sickness I assume a part or all of the doctor's bills. You may say it costs something for me to do this, and I am under no obligation to do it, and you are right. But I have the best class of clerks in the city and as a result I have the best class of custom in the city, and I guess I don't lose enough by it to necessitate an assignment at an early date," and the merchant smiled with very evident satisfaction.

### THE "POSE DEGENERATE."

Boston Fashion Among Young People of Playing at Being Wicked.

Boston Correspondence Chicago Inter-Ocean.

"What's the matter with her? Oh, nothing really. She's doing the pose degenerate, that's all. She's nice and her husband's nice, and they are as fond of each other as two people ever need to be, but she fancies that the pose degenerate is rather a fine thing and he has fallen into her way of thinking.

"She's a college-bred girl, you know," continued the woman of sense, as she poured her friend another cup of tea and settled herself more comfortably behind the dainty initial table. "But instead of being proud of her brains and her breeding, she has somehow jumped to the conclusion that the rather fast bohemian set is the one best worth while, and she is trying as hard as ever she can to ape its manners and customs. In her it's funny, for she really is a Puritan, you know, came from an old Boston line, but in him it's positively absurd. He hates it so, and he's nothing at all of an actor. He comes around here in the evening, about 9 o'clock or so, to bring me a magazine or a new book in which he has been interested, and he acts as if he were at least midnight instead of the beginning of the evening. Then when I tell him Mr. Williams is busy finishing the outline of a brief that has to be done in a hurry, and inquire of him concerning Mrs. Farnham's whereabouts, he replies with the most comical attempt at jauntiness that she has gone to the theater with Jack Knight, 'she goes where she likes, you know.'

"Silly children, they are, nothing more. They have got it into their infant heads that the degenerate pose is the surest method of getting on, and get on they must. The worst of it is that they are both clever enough to be able to do harm by passing on their own distorted ideals.

"In fact," continued the woman of sense, stirring her tea energetically, as she warmed to the unaccustomed labor of preaching, "in fact, it seems to me that if I were asked to put my finger on the worst possible specimen of the evil done by the light plays of a certain type I should point to such young people as the friends of whom I am speaking. They had fine ideals when they came out of college and settled down in their little suburban cottage to enjoy together the fruits of the culture for which they had arduously striven, but they have now come to the conclusion that the best thing in the world is to have the appearance without the inconvenience of wickedness. The modern novel and the modern play have done this for them.

"Oh, of course you are right when you say that they must have been light stuff under it all if they were so easily to be blown about by the latest whiff of degenerate doctrine, and in a way that would be true. But you must remember that they are only infants. Neither of them has a father or a mother living, and being strictly up-to-date they no longer go to church and hear sermons on Sunday. She told me once that she 'thanked God' she hadn't been inside a church for years. You see, they're absolutely no one of their own to tell them that wise people still cling to the old-fashioned notions of virtue and propriety; that well-bred married people still are seen sometimes together, and that while most of us are weak enough to smile at the French jokes about women and the clever thrusts at the morals of men, a few among us still expect to be faithful. Perhaps we, too, are victims of the pose to some extent, but I must stick to my text.

"As for me, I tell her to stay at home and study Browning as she used to do when she and her husband were first married—and Mr. Williams tells him that it is really just as well to appear virtuous in case one is so happy as to be above reproach. Was it Shakespeare—you are far more clever than I—who said: 'Assume a virtue if you have it not.' Strange, isn't it, that those silly children next door should seem to think that it reads 'Assume a vice' if they only knew their Shakespeare when they do their Swinburne, they'd have made no such pitiable mistakes."

### Case of Family Compact.

City Editor—The boss insists upon our employing his son here, and it's as much as I can do to keep him idle. Friend—Idle? You mean 'busy,' don't you? City Editor—No, I don't. If I kept him busy it would keep three or four other men busy correcting his mistakes.—Catholic Standard and Times.

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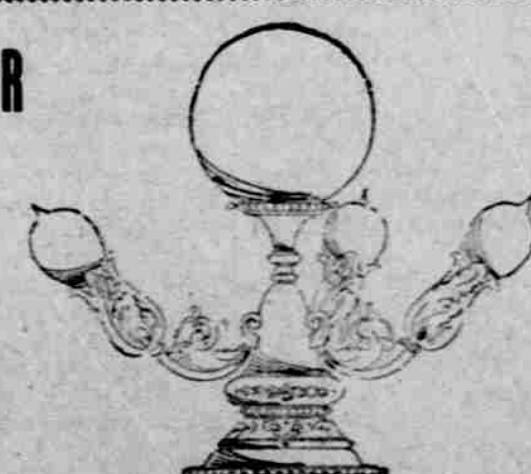
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